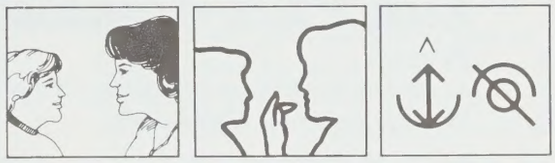
COMMUNICATING TOGETHER



A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ABOUT AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 2 JUNE 1989

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COMMUNICATING TOGETHER

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ABOUT AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

VOL. 7, NO. 2 JUNE 1989

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Communicating Together is published quarterly as a means of sharing the experiences and communication systems of nonspeaking people with their families, communities and the professionals who work with them.

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KEEPING UP WITH MELINDA

GAIL COX

Gail Cox has been working as a speech-language pathologist in the Southern Okanagan School District in Oliver, B.C. for the past seven years. She has a particular interest in augmentative communication and has acted as a therapist, consultant and advocate for nonspeaking students in regular and special education settings. She first met Melinda in 1982.

Melinda is famous in her high school, in fact, according to an editorial in the school newspaper she compares with Madonna in being recognized by her first name only. Melinda is in Grade 10 at Southern Okanagan Secondary School, and particularly enjoys French, writing poetry, cruising the hallways with her friends, swimming, and talking. She is also a whiz on the computer. Melinda has cerebral palsy. She is quadriplegic and uses a wheelchair. Her language skills are normal but her speaking ability is very limited. She attends school with the help of a personal aide, and for the past several years she has used a computer to do her schoolwork and to communicate.

In fact, Melinda's knowledge of communication technology would rival that of many professionals in the field. Over the years, she has moved from 'no tech' to 'light tech' to 'high tech', keeping the parts of her communication system that worked, and discarding those that did not.

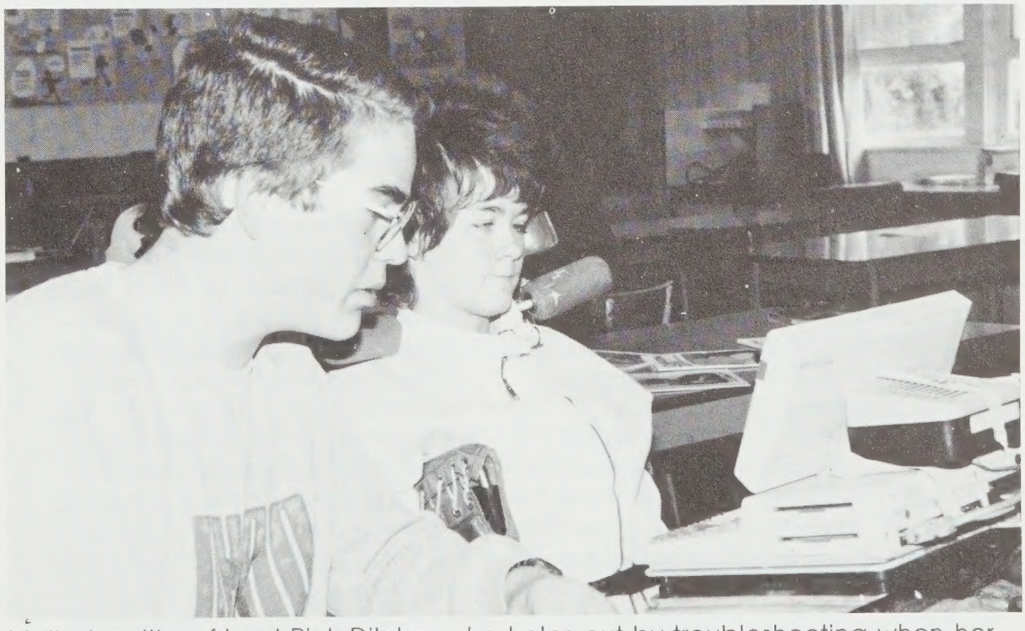
Melinda's First Technology

Melinda has always been a capable communicator. Before starting school she used body language and a few verbalizations such as 'yes' and 'no'. In kindergarten she was taught Blissymbolics; she learned the symbols readily but found a pointing response to be very slow and frustrating. Learning to read was not difficult as Melinda remembers it, but she was 'bugged' by not being able to say the sounds herself. In her early school years she wrote with an Optical Headpointer Strip Printer. She wore a light pointer on her head, and when she pointed to a letter on the machine, the letter was printed out on paper. While giving Melinda the power of written communication, this system had some disadvantages. In order to initiate communication, she had to call someone over to help her use the equipment. The communication process was very slow, and Melinda's poor head control required that her aide steady her head as she selected the letters. The machine was stationary, limiting the locations in which Melinda could communicate. At home, she used a Blissymbol board and Etran frames for numbers and letters, but did not have the optical pointing equipment.

In Grade 3, Melinda got her first computer, an Apple II. A special piece of software called 'The Handicapped Typewriter Program' allowed her to type messages on a printer. The software included a scanning program which Melinda could operate with a single switch placed behind her head. Again, the equipment was stationary, and she did not have a computer at home. Grade 4 brought an additional component, a very early version of the Adaptive Firmware Card along with some special software developed at the University of Washington. Melinda learned to use Morse code, and replaced the single switch with two switches, one on each side of her head. One switch is a 'dot' and the other a 'dash'. Melinda was very pleased with this change in her system; the direct selection of letters through Morse code was a lot faster and, for her, more accurate than the scanning procedure which she had previously used. She can now type at about seven words per minute, and although tapping out Morse code looks like hard work, Melinda says it isn't tiring and by her own report she 'never shuts up'.

In Grade 6, Melinda had her first experience with a voice output communication aid (VOCA), an Epson Speech Pac supplied by the Kinsmen Rehabilitation Foundation. While the possibility of vocal output was exciting, Melinda and those working with her could not get the equipment to function reliably, either at home or at school. This kind of frustration is often experienced by augmentative communicators as they try out new generations of equipment and software, and as their technical resource people learn the idiosyncracies of each type of machine. Often the problems can be overcome, but sometimes, as in Melinda's case, a system is abandoned in frustration.

Fortunately, the episode with the VOCA did not discourage Melinda



Melinda with a friend Rick Dilcher who helps out by troubleshooting when her equipment breaks down.

from trying new technology. In Grade 7, she upgraded her computer to an Apple IIE, and her family bought one for her to use at home. This system moved from elementary to high school with Melinda, when she entered Grade 8 at Southern Okanagan. But the stationary computer now posed a problem. It was located in the school's resource room, while Melinda moved from class to class. She needed to be able to communicate wherever she was, in order to participate in classes and to make friends.

High School Brought a Need for Portable Equipment

During all of Melinda's Grade 9 year, a team from the Sunny Hill Hospital Technical Assistive Devices Service worked on a portable system for her. Finally, the following summer, they were ready. Melinda received a Toshiba 1100+ laptop computer, equipped with Words Plus Software Keyboard Emulator, E Z Talker software and a Votrax speech synthesizer. This allows her to use her head switches and Morse code to input letters, which can be output in speech or write mode. The system also has an instant speech mode, with short preprogrammed messages quickly accessed with a few commands. The Toshiba has a calculator and appointment book software as well, so Melinda can use it for more than speaking and writing. It fits on the wheelchair laptray and is used in class, when moving around the school, out in the community, and at home. She has kept her Apple IIE for word processing at home and at school.

Melinda is very happy to have the computer for communicating, but her first choice is to speak. She says she "surprises herself" with what she is able to say sometimes, and her speech continues to improve. She can presently say about thirty words, and can communicate over the telephone. She finds it frustrating that she is able to speak when she is relaxed, but when she really tries, her voice "doesn't cooperate". Melinda prefers to be without a communication aid some of the time, as she feels that otherwise she would rely entirely on the aid and her oral speech would not improve. Other communication frustrations for Melinda have been equipment breakdowns and accidental activation of the speech synthesizer in class, resulting in whatever she happened to have on the screen being spoken. Educationally, Melinda would benefit from the development of more comprehensive software that follows the school curriculum. If more of the curriculum were on disk it would be much more efficient for her to study and produce written assignments. When Melinda needed to work problems through step-by-step in order to improve her math skills, a local programmer took on the task of creating a program which would allow her to lay out and work problems the way they would be done with paper and pencil.

When asked about her career plans, Melinda says there are three possibilities: a teacher, a daycare teacher, or a poet. She has written a number of poems and is very interested in handicapped children. She expects to attend university and would major in English. Melinda is very enthusiastic about sports, particularly swimming, and devotes a lot of time to improving her physical abilities. In addition to her regular physiotherapy, she does exercises at home with her dad as coach. Again she finds it frustrating that unless she is very relaxed, she is not able to show people what she can do. She has been horseback riding several times in the past and she wishes she could do more riding.

Melinda Talks about Sunny Hill

Sunny Hill Hospital in Vancouver has played a large part in Melinda's life, and she enjoys reminiscing about some of the nurses she has come to know over the years:

> When I go to Sunny Hill every year, the nurses on West Wing make me feel right at home. They say "Welcome to Sunny Hill Hotel" with large smiles on their faces. As they do this, they hug my neck like crazy! They are the nicest nurses I know! There are two wings in the hospital, east and west. When I do go down there in the summer, I always get to be on West Wing because I know most of the staff and children.
>
> My primary nurse, Judi, has been working at the hospital since I've started going there (twelve years). Every year, we go to East Wing, sneak to the big clothes cupboard and steal as many clothes as we can fit on my wheelchair for me and a few of the other children. Then, we run back to our wing before anyone can see us! This is really fun!
>
> Another nurse that I'm used to is named Karen. Every time I turn around, this nurse is playing tricks on me. Once at lunch time, she smeared ketchup all over my glasses while Judi was getting my lunch! There is an English R.N., named Joanna, whom I met when I was ten. We became extremely close last summer. When you're an English person who comes from England, you can have a lot of interesting sayings. This particular day, we were in the dining room having supper when somebody burped. Suddenly Joanna piped up and said, "It's better to belch and bare the shame than squelch the belch and bare the pain". I looked at that woman for five minutes asking myself where did she get that saying from!
>
> Even though I have cerebral palsy, there are many fun things that I've experienced. I picked writing about my experiences with Sunny Hill Hospital's nurses because I enjoy telling people about them. Writing down experiences makes me remember a lot of great memories!"

Melinda was Featured in the School Newspaper

Melinda found it "scary" when she first started high school. The noise level in the gymnasium particularly bothered her, and she did not want to attend events there. She did not like to eat in the presence of other students. But new experiences have increased her confidence, and her goal now is to communicate with her peers and make friends. She is becoming more assertive and takes the initiative in social situations. Now before she gets on the school

bus, she asks her aide to turn up the volume on her speech synthesizer. Her fellow students held back at first, but are now also taking more initiative in coming forward and getting to know Melinda. An editorial in the high school newspaper "Scroll" did a lot to break the ice for Melinda and her fellow students. Grade 12 student Tanya Klaes impressed her readers with what they and Melinda have in common, and reminded them that they have to go to her, she cannot go to them. Here is an excerpt from Tanya's article:

"Melinda Rundle is a normal teen. She loves to go cruising with her brother and "turn up the tunes", she fights with her sister and adores Michael J. Fox. And she giggles. It's hard to understand why Melinda strikes out and people are nervous of her loudness. This is the way Melinda's disability has affected her. She cannot control her movements or her voice. Because of this, students are nervous to approach her.

Something to remember with Melinda is that you have to approach her. Melinda cannot walk up and simply say "Hello". You have to. What I've tried to do in this editorial is to give the wall that separates us from Melinda a push. It is up to you to stamp it down. You don't need to be scared to approach Melinda, just walk up and say "Hi, my name is .....". Melinda will probably squeal her hello and be eager to make friends with you. Take a group of your friends at lunch and go see her. Just say "Hi" because Melinda will do the rest."

Those who know Melinda well have found they learn a great deal from her, both about ability and disability. Her enthusiasm, positive attitude, friendliness, and facility for adapting to and learning from new experiences have served her well in her life so far, and will continue to do so.□

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Friends

KARI HARRINGTON

Kari Harrington was in the original Blissymbol class of 1971 at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre. She has completed high school at Langstaff Secondary School in Richmond Hill, and is attending a life skills class at Markham Participation House. She hopes to move there soon.

When I first started to write this column in *Communicating Together*, I included one of my poems, "Take Time". Maybe you will remember it. Because it takes longer to get to know someone who can't communicate in the usual way, making close friendships can be much more difficult for us. My poem was about taking the time to become a friend.

Just before Christmas, "Take Time" was used in a fund raising effort for the Easter Seal Communication Institute so that they can go on helping those without functional speech in whatever way is needed. Many people "took the time" to be a friend to all of us and gave generously to help the work being done by ESCI. A few of these very caring people took some extra time and included notes and poems they had written. The messages they have expressed in their poems are for all of us, and I will share one of them here. It was sent by Wilfred Cousineau of Toronto. Its message is universal.

SMILE

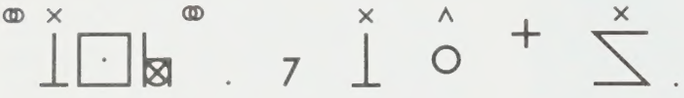
A Smile is something nice to see;
It doesn't cost a cent;
It's something all your own'
It never can be spent;
A Smile is welcome anywhere;
It does away with frowns;
A Smile is good for everyone;
To ease the ups and downs.

There are many different kinds of friends. There are some like Wilfred who we never really get to know, but who still help and support us. There are friends we work with and there are close personal friends who have the same interests as we do. I work with Sue, Ann and John at ESCI, and because of our work, I have the opportunity to get to know them better, so I think of them as my personal friends too. Why don't you be a friend and write and tell me what you would like to read about in my column or share some of your personal experiences?□

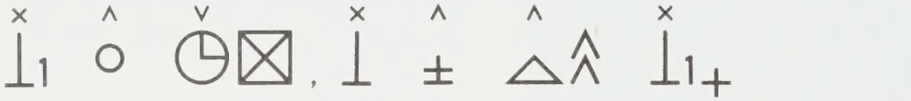
A Letter to Communicating Together

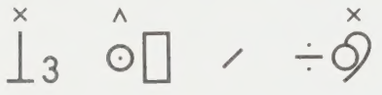
Margaret Szilagyi, an occupational therapist, is a Senior Coordinator at Participation House, Hamilton and District in Binbrook, Ontario. She works with a group of adult Blissymbol users. The group meets for an hour once a week and over several weeks composed a letter for Communicating Together. *Some in the group have quite sophisticated systems and have been using symbols for thirteen years. Others have only just begun and have limited vocabulary. The group often reads stories from the magazine as part of their group activity. We are printing parts of the group's letter on the following page.*

Participation House is a home for forty physically disabled people. Seven people talk with Blissymbols.



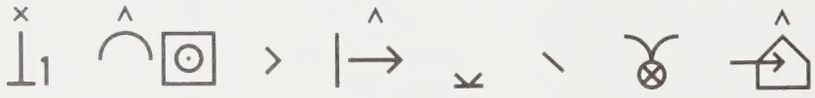
We talk a lot so we have to fix our boards often. People have to see our Blissymbols to talk. They read the words.





The house is made for wheelchairs, no stairs, no rugs, big doors and electric doors.

We dream of going on an airplane to visit countries far away.



Please write to us.

Lorne Parker
Robert Macdonnel
Ken McKaig
Elnora Dudley
David Dawson
Steven Smith
Don Wood

Editor's Note:
In the above excerpt, the symbols have been reproduced as written by the students and may vary from those presented in Blissymbols for Use.

Why I Enjoyed California

BENNY BELAIR

Benny Belair won an essay writing contest last year sponsored by Community Action and Awareness (CAA) in Ontario, which awarded him a travel scholarship to help with his expenses in going to the Fifth ISAAC Biennial Conference last October. On his return, he submitted the following report of his trip to CAA.

I learned a lot of things while I was at the ISAAC meeting in California. I enjoy being with my friends. I helped a lot of people, and people helped me. I like to know what is out there. I think it helped me to have friends. My friends and I had fun and had parties, but we worked hard, for our sponsors.

Besides the parties, I learned things that I never knew existed. I saw some things that I never dreamt could be possible. I saw a computer that works with reflections from your eyes. To explain in more detail, it used a light above to reflect off your eye, which in turn can tell the computer what you are looking at. I also saw a computer which works like a bike reflector. This was more of a stationary computer, right now. This computer worked almost the same way. The light came from your forehead and shone on the screen, which had a standard keyboard on the screen. The user would shine the reflector on the letter on the screen.

I enjoyed meeting the people who made my computer program for my Toshiba 1100. They up-dated my program while I was there. I was grateful to them.

I have just one complaint. The conference was too short.

I enjoyed it. Thanks. □

This section of *Communicating Together* is sponsored by Pilot Club International, Ontario District.

Learning to Talk with Symbols

MARJOLEIN STATIUS MULLER

Marjolein Statius Muller lives in the Netherlands and is the mother of Casper, a seven-year old boy with Downs Syndrome. At the recent European Blissymbol Affiliate meeting in Belgium, she presented an interesting case study of Casper from a mother's perspective. It is the basis of the following article. She also attended the fifth Biennial ISAAC Conference in Anaheim, California, and shares a few of her thoughts about that meeting.

When our son Casper was four years old, on the advice of our speech therapist, we had him examined at the Radbout Hospital in Nijmegen. We already knew at that time he had Downs Syndrome, but we wanted to know what the prognosis was for his speech development. Our question to the doctors was, "Casper has a speech defect; what sort of defect is this; what can we expect in the future and how should he be treated?"

The diagnosis was verbal dyspraxia (incomprehensible consonants). Talking would be difficult for him to master. We should accept that he would not talk in full sentences. Sometimes parts of a sentence would be missing or incomprehensible.

For a child who cannot talk and who wants to say so much, this caused insurmountable difficulties. You could compare it to a container into which more and more is stuffed, but nothing is taken out, and sooner or later the container bursts!

We were advised to try Blissymbols when he was about six, though we, as parents, had never heard of them. Casper was such a cheerful little chap and it all seemed so far away, we thought we still had plenty of time. But our progressive speech therapist thought otherwise. She had already worked intensively with Casper for a year. She had taught him to look carefully, and to begin systematically from the top left when trying to pick out one picture from amongst many others on a page.

She had also practised memory games, matching games and many other educational games with him. "Why wait until he is six? We can begin right now. Now he learns fast. The sooner the better!", was her opinion. She herself knew Blissymbols, having worked with them at Mytyl School, a school for handicapped children.

Where to Begin

When we received a book with 1,400 symbols described in English, plus an instruction book, also in English, my first thought was, "Where on earth do I begin?" Anyone else who saw all these symbols would think I was crazy to teach all this to a young child, and with Downs Syndrome at that.

But once again a determined speech therapist and a hesitant promise of cooperation from the school worked wonders. Due to difficulties in finding a place in a special school, Casper attends a small neighborhood school. This works better than expected.

There were not many materials available. There were coloured tiles measuring four by four centimeters. Together with these tiles we found pictures which also clearly resembled the symbol. Dick Bruna's Lotto game was specially suitable. Casper quickly learned many of these symbols. And he enjoyed it too! Afterwards we moved on to the symbols which were recognizable in some ways but which needed some explanation.

The next phase focussed on nouns and verbs. Now he could learn to think in little sentences; first the subject (yellow), then the verb (green) and then an object (orange).

Simultaneously with the Blissymbols, he learned to use gestures coupled with specific sounds, not the finger alphabet but a method developed by Trijntje de Wit-Gosker, called "Reading is Doing" which is used in the Netherlands to teach handicapped children to learn to read in special schools.

Emphasizing the sounds with gestures, as in a game, makes them more visible and easier to recognize and remember. Casper understood what he should say but could not make the sounds in the right order at the right moment. With reinforcement from the gestures, this worked better.

The combination of Blissymbols and Trijntje's gestures seemed ideal. Through use of the Blissymbols his language development proceeded well, as did his speech through use of sound/gestures. At the same time he was actually learning to recognise all sounds and letters; it was in fact a method for learning to read.

Time passed and Casper had learned many symbols, but still didn't use symbols to communicate. Should we continue? Was this not an unnecessary burden on him? I made a large communication board out of wood (this was also a learning process for me) where the symbols he had learned could be hung up, grouped by colour. Our intention was that he could use this to work with at school.

To begin with, Casper could say some words but then he forgot them again. His passive vocabulary had been quite big. Now he was building up an active vocabulary through constant practice, but he was still not communicating with the Blissymbols. He used hands, feet and one or two syllable words to make clear what he wanted to say, but if I asked him something which was not easily shown by gestures, then communication broke down.

Casper is now seven years old. With guidance from the teachers, and often with much enthusiastic help from his classmates, the symbols

are still being used to develop his speech and language abilities.

Now, with each new subject, we make a "speech board" with all the relevant symbols on loose cards. He places the symbols in the right order in response to questions and then reads the story for himself by looking at the symbols. In this way you can hear him speak the words clearly. All our efforts have therefore been worth while!

Using Trijntje de Wit's method together with the symbols as an extra memory aid, we are trying to teach Casper to read. If it proves too difficult for him to learn to write, letter by letter, then he should be able to produce written language using Blissymbols with a computer. Within the foreseeable future, we hope that an effective and simple computer program will be available.

It would be an enormous step forward for him to be able to type something himself that others could read. A world of undreamed possibilities will open up, writing one's own letters, letting feelings be known, making shopping lists and all sorts of previously unintelligible remarks being written down on paper for friends to see.

Some Observations on the ISAAC Conference

Last fall I was awarded an ISAAC parent travel scholarship, and had the opportunity of attending the Fifth Biennial Conference of the International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC), October 23-26, 1988, in Anaheim, California.

I was very impressed by all the papers and presentations of the enthusiastic people. Because of the variety of contributors from different countries with different points of view, it made the discussions even more interesting. They gave me good advice and a lot of encouragement to continue.

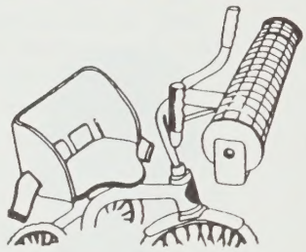
However, there were very few items about augmentative and alternative communication with nonspeaking mentally handicapped children. I really do understand that communication for physically handicapped nonspeaking children is their first need in order to remove them from total isolation. But for mentally handicapped nonspeaking children (and adults), we can also talk about isolation, even if they can walk. They do not have the means to prove that they are intellectually better than estimated. Because of the lack of communication, their possibilities are even more limited.

For the next conference, therefore, I would like to ask your special attention for this group of nonspeaking mentally handicapped children and adults. For some reason they are mentally handicapped, but because of their speaking problems, they often are classified as functioning on a lower level.

By developing their communication ability, it will offer them a chance for a higher educational level, an animation of the mind, so they can find their own identities. It will be a step to more independence and to better acceptance by the people around them.□

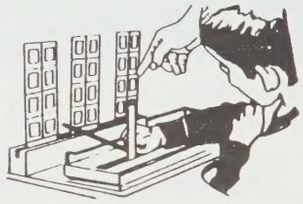
Casper practises gestures with his therapist.

Adaptations for use with non-speaking individuals



Ideas for :

— portable communication boards
— adapted laptrays
— head and manual pointers
— encoding systems and more ...



... shared by therapists and teachers from 40 centres (Canada, United States, Sweden...), and gathered in one book.

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Learning to be Independent

GEB VERBURG

"Research and Publications" is written by Geb Verburg, who has been involved in the field of nonspeech communication since the mid-seventies. A cognitive scientist, Mr. Verburg is currently working as a research associate in several projects at the Hugh MacMillan Medical Centre, Toronto.

This article addresses the challenge issued in the previous column, where I argued that AAC devices and the facilitator-based method of graphic symbol provision perpetuate a dependency of the symbol user. That is, the user who is not able to add new symbols to his/her symbol board or communication device and who therefore depends on the facilitator or another adult to add new symbols and new knowledge descriptors to his/her vocabulary. I am writing about cognitive development and suggest that you as parents or we as AAC professionals can foster that development in students who are nonspeaking and physically disabled. By focussing beyond direct communication needs we may be able to avoid having our students fall too far behind their able-bodied peers. I will first put the problem in a more general form and context. I will again, as I have done before, link the fields of mobility and communication by asking the following question.

What Else Do Children Learn When They Learn to Walk and Talk?

When a child learns to walk and talk in the course of the first 24 months of life, we, the surrounding adults, are so impressed with these accomplishments that we do not realize that the child has learned many other things while learning how to walk and how to talk. In other words, we focus on the product of these learning processes and often fail to see that the process of mastering these essential skills is itself a very valuable learning event. Children who are physically disabled and who are unable to walk and talk, however, miss out on this learning process. They lose a chance to learn all the other skills that every able bodied child picks up while she or he is learning to walk and talk.

Giving a powered wheelchair and a communication device or a 400 symbol board to a child who is severely physically disabled does very little to make up for the loss of that play-like learning that accompanies the mastery of mobility and communication. The devices may allow a child to become mobile and to become a communicator but do not make up for other skills that able-bodied children pick up when learning to walk and talk.

Nonspeaking and severely physically disabled children need to be given different means to master these other abilities and skills. In what follows, I will identify some of these "other" skills and suggest ways in which we can reorganize the user's world and our own attitudes to allow for these skills to be constructed by the user.

What then are the things that able-bodied children learn as they master mobility and communication skills, and what are the skills that children who are physically disabled lack? This question has just begun to be asked in the field of mobility literature, and I discussed it in one of my previous columns. Spatial skills, searching for hidden objects, orientation in space are some of the skills that appear to be acquired slower if an able-bodied infant is physically restrained by a cast, for example. To my knowledge, questions about what else children learn when they learn to talk are not yet asked in the AAC literature.

The items that I would choose as abilities, picked up almost accidentally, and which are yet so very essential, are:

- construction of self, others and reality
- involvement with things and people
- independence, self confidence, ego-strength

These items are the staples of personality, cognition and communication. A child who learns to crawl independently or move towards a desired object learns something about him or herself and about the object. The same is true for a child who utters a new word or sound combination and receives feedback from adults. Every act "constructs" the child and the world for the child. Independent mobility is important in this construction process; for students who are physically disabled, words, concepts, and symbols play a crucially important role in this construction of the world.

There are many other skills that infants pick up while learning to walk and talk. A good way of finding out what infants learn between the age of twelve and thirty-six months is by scanning the child development literature on able-bodied children.

A not quite random selection of titles and topics from two recent issues of *Child Development* gives us a sample of what young children learn: Self-development and self-conscious emotions (Lewis, Sullivan, Stanger, and Weiss, 1989), the appearance/reality distinction (Flavell, Green, Flavell, 1989), how children establish word-object relations (Baldwin and Markman, 1989), what is the role of nonverbal interaction as a precursor of social coordination (Eckerman, Davis and Didow, 1989). The topics are not simple: self, world, reality, emotions and social coordination; they are, however, matters that every child — speaking and nonspeaking

— must learn to resolve satisfactorily and integrate in his or her reality. We must always keep in mind the potential for cognitive and personal growth that lies behind every symbol and every concept mastered.

There are many very concrete skills that are acquired in those first two years and perfected in the following six or ten. Some examples are: physically moving into or out of a sphere of activity or a place, taking sides, playing roles, telling stories, asserting oneself, learning to make mistakes, yelling to be noticed, turn taking, sorting and classifying, and the list of skills from Bigge (1988) mentioned in the "Blissymbol Talk" column of the previous issue of *Communicating Together*.

Children who are severely physically disabled and/or nonspeaking do fall behind in these areas, both in the abstract and concrete ones. Maybe we can do more or do things differently so that this gap is no longer a necessary part of being disabled.

Nurturing Independence

My first and most urgent recommendation is, therefore, that if you do any of the things suggested below, do them in such a way that:

- the student (user) chooses
- the student organizes/discards
- the student constructs his or her world
- the student creates his or her communication context

A student can be much more effective when learning things on his or her own (with all the help that you can give, but without you taking over).

Vocabulary Expansion

One way of empowering augmentative communicators is by teaching them vocabulary expansion techniques. Ann Sutton (1988) presented a paper at the fifth biennial ISAAC Conference in which she compares the vocabulary expansion strategies of four augmentative and alternative communication system users. Vocabulary expansion consists of the use of "any symbol, spelled word, gesture, vocalization or a combination of these to convey a target meaning". Some examples of strategies are: Blissymbol strategies; describing the function, appearance or features; giving close association; or using a synonym, super or subordinate category member. What I like about these vocabulary expansions is that, unlike their computerized counterparts, these techniques can be applied endlessly, everywhere, and can be applied to any concept that needs to be expressed. Thus the technique is open ended; it is under the user's control and can be used in totally new situations, unlike the preprogrammed computer compactions which must be fed in first by a facilitator, then must be remembered by the user, and then retrieved.

Vocabulary Growth: Low Tech Methods

Constructing Mind and World

I use this grand title here to refer to "independent vocabulary additions", ways in which students (clients or users) can add symbols or words to their current vocabulary.

1. My first suggestion is to put a symbol on the child's board that says "I would like that symbol" or "I would like a symbol for that", or even "symbol" and "please". And I would like to insert a message in the minds of all AAC professionals that says: "Every symbol that my client acquires without my direct involvement represents some independence gained".
2. The method of vocabulary addition that I suggest next is most effective in a classroom or family environment and is one in which the fellow students or siblings are the auxiliary ears of the user. A daily competition could be organized in which that student wins who provides the most appropriate or most needed symbol or concept to the user. This could become part of the preparation and planning for general classroom activities. For example: You are going to see... (a movie, a cultural event, a historic occasion). What are the concepts, and what is the background knowledge needed, and how can this be symbolized?

   The skills learned here are: deciding whether or not to accept the symbol; acknowledging or showing appreciation; teaching economy with words and symbols; explaining why a symbol is or is not expressive of what the user wants to say; and interacting socially in a task oriented and classroom relevant way.
3. A loop tape with a tape recorder that continuously records the words that occur in the immediate vicinity of the user is my third choice. The user can stop the tape as soon as he or she hears a word that needs to be added to the vocabulary. Later a facilitator can help find the word and put it on the board.

   Skills learned are the same as in point number two without, however, the very important social component.
4. Another method is to have the symbols available in pockets on the classroom walls so that children can go and get whatever they feel they need at any given moment. This presupposes mobility and (a far bigger flaw) assumes that the child knows the symbol to pick up. It could work well with relatively mobile children who have fairly good hand function and who, at a beginning symbol learning level, could benefit from stacks of symbols placed near the things to which they refer.

Organizing Mind and World

If any of these methods takes off then we have a good chance of running out of space on the symbol board and that of course is another very good learning opportunity. With a relatively minor change in technique, it is possible to make all symbols on a symbol board removable. Rather than gluing and laminating and covering with lexan, symbols could be made on the equivalent of "Post-it" notes so that they can be moved, removed, and put back a number of times before losing their stickiness. This method of nonpermanent adhesion would immediately make the symbol board more dynamic. The user, with his or her facilitator, could reorganize the board (mind world), delete symbols or shift them to a less prominent place, such as in "the archives". At first this may be very difficult to do. But please remember that reorganizing one's mind/ world/ personality is not easy: we do it in minor ways all the time and can do it because we can change our words and concepts. We have learned that, and I think nonspeaking children should have as much practice learning that skill as possible.□

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BLISSYMBOL TALK

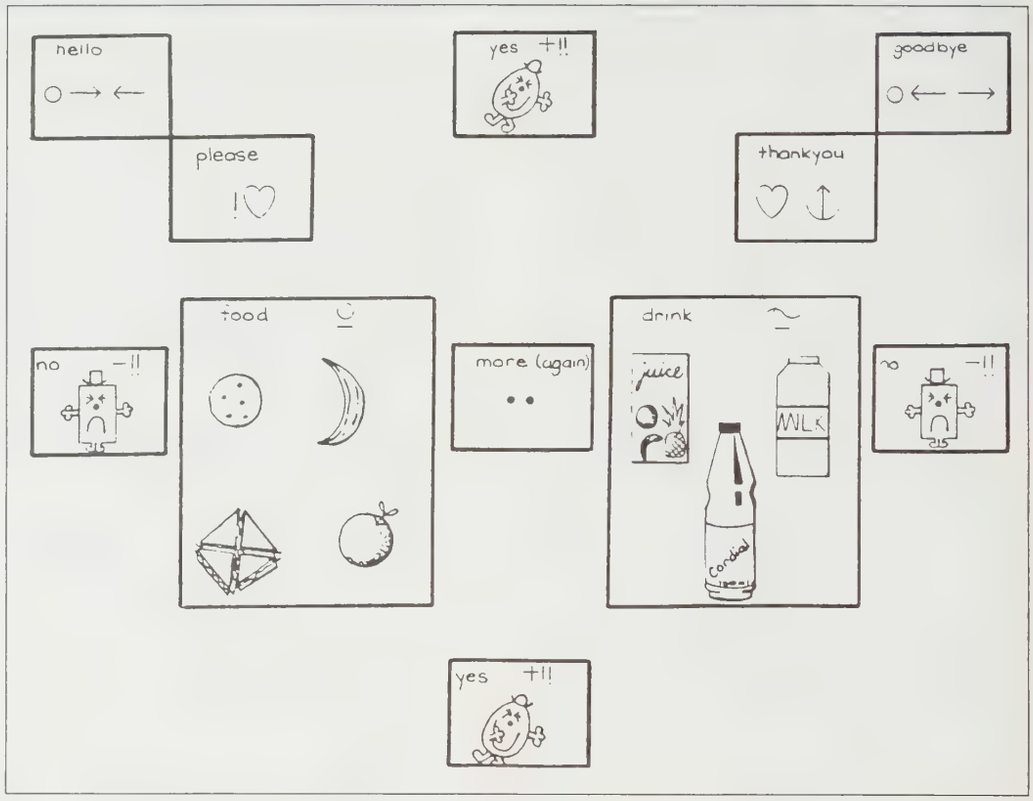
In the last issue we introduced some ways in which Blissymbols could contribute to the development of discrimination, identification and classification skills. In this issue, we'll begin with a question frequently asked by instructors of preschoolers, and refer once more to the food symbols in responding. Then we'll move to the higher level cognitive skills of concept-learning, rule-learning and problem solving.

How can the instructor reconcile the young child's need for pictures that can be readily understood, learned and used, and the need for a "system to grow on"? The advantages to be found in Blissymbols for communication and cognitive development are difficult to dispute, yet we want youngsters to be able to communicate as quickly as possible without undue time being devoted to learning the symbolic representations for the concepts they wish to express. Pictures can often fill this requirement, but we need to ask if they are doing enough. We must question: Is the system powerful enough? Is the child able to use and develop all his or her capabilities? Is there room to grow? Are we preparing for the reading of print and the development of cognitive competencies, along with the ability to communicate?

Let's use the communication display developed by Keila Waksvik, described in *Communicating Together* (Volume 4, Number 2, page 8), to examine pictures and Blissymbols being learned together.

As well as communicating with the display — socializing, requesting items and responding to questions — we can explore some cognitive and literacy learning opportunities this mixed display offers. Its organization allows the child to discriminate between pictures of food and drink items and to identify the items by asking for their names. As well, the clustering of items along with the Bliss' classifier symbol, gently leads the child to "classifying". All the foods are in the *food* box. All the drinks are in the *drink* box.

Invite the child to use both the pictures and Blissymbols and draw his or her attention to each graphic's



Example of a display showing "Mr. Yes" and "Mr. No".

characteristics. For the picture you could say:- "Look how this resembles the sandwich you are eating." For the Blissymbol - "See how the *mouth* ○ is in the symbol for *food* ○ . We put food in our mouth. And there's the *earth* — . Much of our food grows from the earth. Remember the potatoes and beans we saw growing in the garden?" Now, look at the print - "There's the letter "F" just like in Frank's name and see the two *o's*. They're the same letters as in "snooze" (or some other fun word).

From observing the child's reactions, the instructor will know what further information to bring to the child, whether more talk or more experience is needed, and which type of graphic is most meaningful in a particular context. All types of graphics offer learning opportunities, but Blissymbolics is exceptional in this regard! The instructor who knows Blissymbols can bring an exciting educational advantage to the learner. The symbols offer flags for possible attention. By focussing upon them at whatever level the child shows interest, we can use the semantic links between symbols and the structure of the Blissymbol system to further many types of learning.

The Higher Cognitive Skills

Now back to Bigge's and Carpignano's hierarchy of cognitive skills, introduced last issue. This time we will look at the higher level skills.

A Sequence of Learning Skills An Integrated Model

- Problem-solving Skills
- Rule-Learning Skills
- Concept-Learning Skills
- Classification Skills
- Identification Skills
- Discrimination Skills

Bigge, J. 1988, p.193.

By finding ways of using Blissymbols in more than one way and by generalizing across classes of symbols, children can develop concept-learning skills. For example, add the *action indicator* ^ to the body-part symbols and explore with your

Communicating in Ontario

A NEWSLETTER FOR EDUCATORS ABOUT AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

Number 8 June 1989

Summer Time is Almost Here!

Even though you may be slowing down to enjoy a few months off we are still working! If you have been putting off coming to visit why not do it during lazy hazy months ahead. Come and see us, take in a video, and peruse our books, articles and displays.

What's inside?

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Look in the book	Page 3
Bulletin Board	Page 4

ESCI Corner

Announcements !

As you have probably noticed in *Communicating Together*, Shirley McNaughton is retiring from her position as Coordinator of the Educational Service Program for the Communication Institute. She will be profoundly missed and yet we all know that she will still be deeply involved in the field even during her "retirement" (will she ever really retire?!).

We are pleased to announce that Naomi Gibson has joined our staff as Director of the Educational Service Program. Naomi's warm personality and her expertise in the field of education will provide ESCI 's Educational Service Program some exciting direction.

Naomi brings to ESCI twenty years of teaching experience as a Special Education Teacher. During the past seven years she has been involved in consultations and liaison with other educators in areas of software, technology for exceptional students, and the use of technology in education. She joins us fresh from the ranks of the Ministry of Education having spent the past two years addressing some of the issues pertaining to the use of technology in education.

We are looking forward to working with Naomi and welcome her to our ESCI team !

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24 Ferrand Drive, Don Mills, Ontario
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Six Laws of Learning

Colleen Haney, in ***Assistive Device News,*** February, 1989, published an interesting article about some things that we should consider when we are teaching students who are augmentative communicators. We felt her ideas were well worth sharing with you.

There are six laws that a clinician, teacher or facilitator can use when preparing lessons for an augmentative communicator. Instruction is most effective when these laws are obeyed.

The Law of Motivation.

We need to look at what we are trying to teach. Is this something that a nondisabled student would want to talk about, would want to do, or likes to do? Is it age appropriate? Giving students the power to share a joke is more likely to be motivating than the ability to label the day of the week or what the weather is. Place yourself in the shoes of the child, and address his or her communication needs through what you experience.

The Law of Individualization.

This law not only applies to the vocabulary that we introduce, but also in the manner that displays are constructed or devices are introduced. A theme board with a sticker with the child's name on it will make it his or her own if everyone is using the same display. A head pointer with pretty ribbon on it will individualize it for the girl using it. Simple adaptations such as this can also motivate a student to use a device.

The Law of Involvement.

Are your students observers or participants? We learn better by being actively involved. We need to take into consideration the physical limitations of our students. We may have to learn to re-phrase our questions so that severely physically disabled students can point using their eyes and thus answer a question. Consult with your school physical or occupational therapist on how your different students might be able to physically indicate an answer without using their communication board or device. This will provide ways of staying actively involved for the duration of the lesson instead of being a listener only.

The Law of Multi Input.

Have you made the lesson a symphony of sound, touch, taste, smell ,etc. whenever possible? The use of music, scents, photographs, sign language, all enhance the different learning styles that may be reflected among your students.

The Law of Providing Opportunities for Listening and Oral Language Production before Learning to Read and Write.

Disabled students often miss the simple pleasures of being read to because their busy schedules do not allow the time, but, reading to children is important. Disabled children are usually listeners in a conversation, but it does not mean that they are good at it. Even if students are good listeners it does not mean that they will be good at verbally expressing themselves. Think of your own ability to understand a foreign language: you can probably understand more than you can speak. Provide time for students to develop their skills in listening and producing "speech" through the use of their augmentative communication systems.

The Law of Success.

Your students are familiar with failure through their every day exposure to the things they can not do themselves. You should strive to let them experience success.

Consider these laws when making up your lesson plans. Chances are that your lessons will be more interesting and your students will learn more quickly.

Keyguards for computer access

Why are keyguards important?

Keyguards can serve one of many purposes:

1) To prevent unintentional activation of more than one key due to poor fine motor control.

2) To allow the use of a keyboard that otherwise may be too complex for an individual student.

3) To protect the computer from the inevitable day to day dirt and from the accidents that may give your computer keyboard an unintentional bath.

Keyguards are so expensive. What can I do with my limited budget?

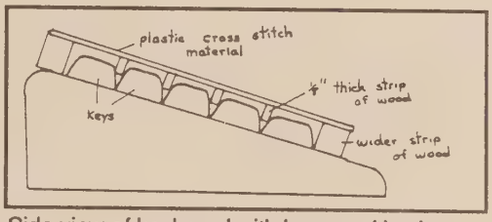
Linda Burkhart in her book " Using Computers and Speech Synthesis to Facilitate Interaction with Young and / or Severely Handicapped Children" has several suggestions for keyguards that are easily constructed from materials that are available from local stores. One method that she suggests uses Tinker Toys to isolate individual keys on the keyboard (see diagram A). Programs that use keys such as right and left arrows and the return key are ideal for this type of adaptation. Many basic cause and effect software programs such as Sticky Bear Opposites (Weekly Reader Software) can be highly reinforcing for budding computer fans.

Another easily made keyguard can be constructed from counted cross stitch plastic and bass wood strips (see diagram B and C). This type of keyguard can be used with a student who is able to use the whole keyboard but is perhaps having a struggle activating only one key at a time.

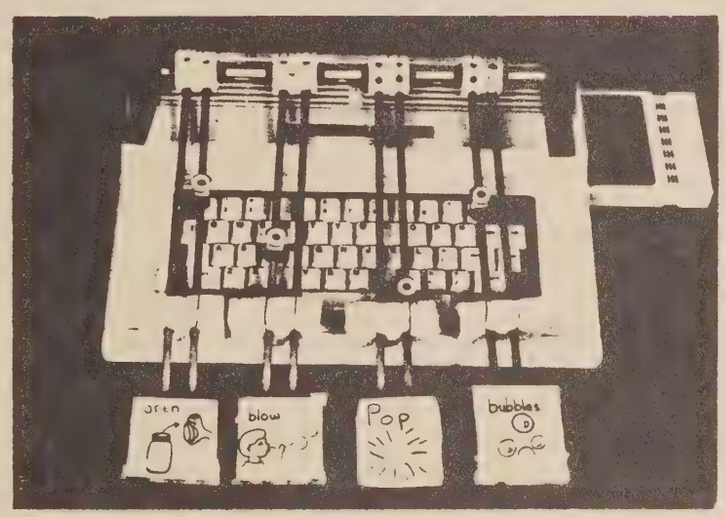
Reference:

Linda J. Burkhart, (1987). Using Computers and Speech Synthesis to Facilitate Communicative Interaction with Young and/or Severely Handicapped Children. College Park, Maryland.

C

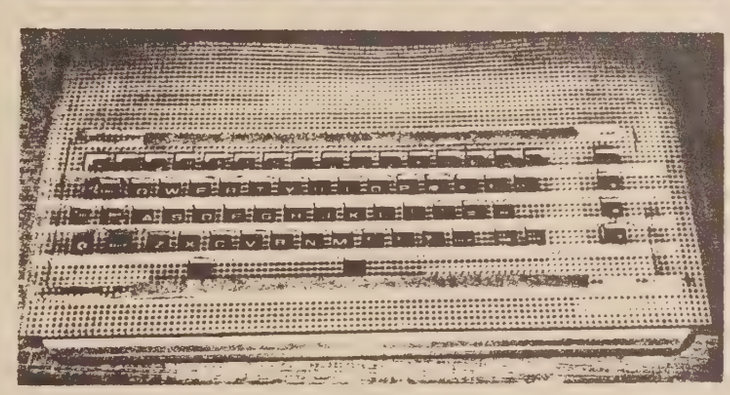


Side view of keyboard with keyguard in place.



A

Keyboard fitted with Tinker Toy paddles to activate four keys.



B

Keyboard with wood-and-plastic keyguard in place.

Look in the Book !

Communication Programming for Persons With Severe Handicaps, Vocal and Non Vocal Strategies. (Revised Edition)

Caroline Musselwhite, Karen W. St. Louis

Musselwhite and St. Louis offer excellent insight into the issues of programming for augmentative communicators through this book. Text sections focus on the decision making process involved in selecting a system of communication for a nonspeaking person, and overviews of various vocal and non vocal systems. The information contained in this resource makes it profitable reading for someone new to the field of augmentative communication, yet goes beyond the basics for those already involved.

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student, the exciting new dimension you've created. The *mouth* ○ now becomes *to talk* ○; the *ear*) becomes *to hear*); the *eye* ○ becomes *to see* ○; the *legs and feet* ∠ become *to walk* ∠ or *to go*. We can hunt for other uses of the body part symbols and learn that the *eye* ○ symbol appears in the symbol *to sleep,* ⊡ when the eyes are closed or in the symbol for *beautiful,* ○♡↑ describing when the eye is happy. In searching for other examples of the *ear*) symbol, we can discover the symbol for *music,*)♂ what the ear gets from notes or the symbol for *language* ♀, that which is spoken and heard. And the *mouth* ○ can lead us to the symbol for *secret* ⊡ when the mouth is kept closed, or to the symbol for *story* □○ where we take from a page something that is spoken. Each time we find a new symbol containing a familiar symbol component, we broaden our original thinking, and we add to our concept learning.

If we take the *action indicator* and apply it to other symbols we know, we have further opportunities for concept learning - discovering the "doing" verbs, *to get* ⚓ and *to give* ⚓; *to play* ^♡↑ and *to work* ^; *to come* →| and *to go* |→; and the "being" verbs, *to be* ⊕ and *to feel* ♡; *to want* ♡? and *to have* ±; *to think* ⌒ and *to believe* ♡△.

As for rule-learning, the *action indicator* ^ provides a wonderful example of consistency and regularity. You'll see it in most sentences; whenever you do, it will denote that some type of activity is being represented by the symbol over which it appears. You can look for the doer of the action (subject) and the receiver of the action (object) and examine the different types of sentences when there is no subject or no object - all the time exploring the rules of language. The consistency of Blissymbols can be very helpful at this early stage, in understanding how our language works.

And of course, there'll be other indicators - e.g. the *description indicator, the plural indicator, and the tense indicators.* As they are learned, reference can be made back to the *action indicator* and discrimination, identification and classification can be experienced again, preparing for further concept-learning and further rule-learning.

Progressing to problem solving, Blissymbolics offers the best problem solving techniques of them all! Through the strategy symbols and the combine indicator, new symbols can be created from the symbols already known. The combine indicator before and after a string of symbols indicates, "This is my own way to solve a communication problem. I am creating this new and personal symbol for my specific purpose at this time!" An example of a combined symbol that uses the *mouth* ○ symbol is ○△, synthetic speech, from speaking that is produced or manufactured by man. While solving communication problems by using Blissymbols, the student is also allowed opportunities for lots of cognitive questioning. "What if I put the *action indicator* ^ over *legs and feet?*" ^∠ (The new symbol would be *to walk.*) ∠ "What if I add *musical note* ♂ to this new symbol?" (The resulting symbol would be *to dance* ∠♂.) "What if I now add the symbol for *musical note* ♂ to *to talk?*" ○ (The new symbol would be *to sing* ○♂.)

An interesting follow-up activity as new symbols are introduced, can be an examination of any small circle that appears - deciding whether or not it represents the mouth. If it does, why not colour it red - to emphasize its association with the mouth (and its relationship to the colour, red)? "Does the little circle relate to food and eating or to language or to something else? If it does not relate to the mouth, what does it portray? Is it part of an object as in the handle of the *scissors* ⚮ symbol or in the head of the flower in the flower symbol ⚲? Or is it used for another reason - as in the symbol, *to combine,* ⚭, where the small circles represent two overlapping links in a chain, demonstrating a joining together." And then we can find further uses of this symbol in *to marry* ⚭ and *to be engaged* |⚭. And on we can go to further discovery - as the child grows older. For the more advanced student, the development of a personal dictionary and thesaurus can provide much fruitful learning. We'll explore some related activities and take a look at literacy readiness opportunities in future articles.

The logic of the system of Blissymbolics provides endless opportunities for discovering rules and solving problems - and tells young learners incidentally, that they **can** communicate what **they** want to say, if they use their system to the full. While doing this they are growing in cognitive and language competencies, as well as in communication skills.

For the instructor, the challenge is that of being in a state of readiness. As she interacts with students, she never knows when a symbol will be appropriate to introduce - for the purpose of discrimination, identification, classification, concept learning, rule discovery or problem solving. Knowing the capabilities of Blissymbolics and providing a learning environment in which the child is exposed to and can select items and areas that interest him - from pictures, from Blissymbols and from print - is the exciting and rewarding role of the Blissymbol instructor.

Next issue - Blissymbols and literacy.

Blissymbols used herein are derived from the symbols described in the work *Semantography*, original copyright © C.K. Bliss, 1949.

September 1982, C.K. Bliss granted an exclusive, non-cancellable and perpetual, worldwide license to the Blissymbolics Communication Institute, to provide standards for the application of Blissymbols, for use by handicapped persons and persons having communication, language and learning difficulties. In 1987, the Institute was renamed Blissymbolics Communication International.

THE PARAPHRASE

CATHY FAIRLEY

The Paraphrase is written for those who are moving into traditional orthography. It offers an independent reading opportunity for the growing reader. The Paraphrase is written by Cathy Fairley, former consultant, Easter Seal Communication Institute. In this issue, she reports on the recent appointment of Shirley McNaughton to the Order of Canada.

The "Order of Canada"

Shirley McNaughton is now a member of the "Order of Canada". This is a great honour. It is given each year to special Canadians.

The motto of the award is in Latin. It says "desiderantes meliorem patoriam". It is for people who help make Canada a better country.

The award was given to Shirley in Ottawa on April 19. The Governor General Jeanne Sauvé gave it to Shirley and forty-seven other people.

Many of us know Shirley. We know that she deserves this award. In 1971, she and others found out about Charles Bliss and his symbols. Since then she has worked very hard. Blissymbols are now used all over the world. Shirley has helped nonspeaking people in many ways. She has also helped the people who work with them.

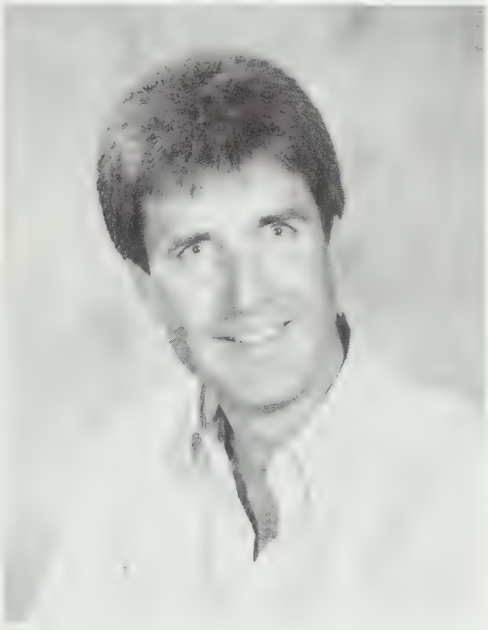
Shirley McNaughton

In May, Shirley's friends gave a party for her. The party was to celebrate this award. It was a way to say thank you to Shirley.

Congratulations Shirley on your special award. Good luck in the future!

Prentke Romich Company

BARRY ROMICH



This is the first in a series of articles about some of the companies that are providing technology to those who require augmentative communication devices. As we present the companies, however, we have first to introduce their founders, as the beliefs and standards of these individuals have strongly influenced the paths their companies have taken.

I first met Barry Romich in Ottawa in the mid seventies at a meeting hosted by the National Research Council, Canada. A group of researchers and developers had been invited to come together to share their current projects and ideas and to explore and reinforce the role to be assumed by technology in the area of rehabilitation. Barry was one of three "young" Americans who earned my strong admiration during those early years. The other two were Gregg Vanderheiden and Rick Foulds. It was evident, even in the seventies, that these three young engineers would provide strong leadership to the application of rehabilitation technology in the years to come. For Barry, the initial contribution came through research, development and manufacturing. His influence has been extended to many more areas, however, as Barry has ably and enthusiastically undertaken executive committee responsibilities in Resna and ISAAC, and as he has guided the Prentke Romich Company into an involvement with matters relating to advocacy, education, training, professional development, and international applications.

The content of the following article by Barry tells what PRC has accomplished. The style is like Barry himself and illustrates why PRC is one of to-day's leading manufacturers of augmentative communication devices. It is direct, succinct, and clearly organized; it looks at people along with products. And to the content and style, I must add some personal comments about Barry himself. In every undertaking, he is as compassionate and caring as he is hard-working and competent. He has built PRC on a foundation of integrity, good business knowledge, high standards and respect for persons with disabilities. He is a special human being, making an important contribution. We are pleased to share his company with our readers.

Shirley McNaughton

How it All Began

Prentke Romich Company was founded in 1966 by Ed Prentke and Barry Romich. The company was a spinoff of a medical engineering research program at Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland, Ohio. For the first nine years, PRC was strictly an evening and week-end venture for the founding partners. Then in 1975, the Veterans Administration purchased a quantity of a PRC telephone dialer to be used with an environmental control system for spinal cord injured veterans. The proceeds from this project were ploughed back into additional product development, including devices to serve people who couldn't speak.

The first PRC communication device was built in 1969. It was a typing system based on a teletype machine discarded by the phone company. The client had suffered a stroke that left him with no speech and nearly total paralysis.

During the two decades since that first PRC communication device, the field of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) has germinated and blossomed. Prentke Romich Company, based in Wooster, Ohio, has been at the forefront and is now a world leader in this field. The company now has a staff of about eighty-five people, including over twenty speech pathologists. These people are all dedicated to the PRC Mission: To help people with disabilities achieve their potential in educational, vocational and personal pursuits.

PRC and Minspeak

Early this decade, we had the good fortune to become associated with Bruce Baker, a linguist who had devised a unique and powerful vocabulary coding system. Together we continued the development of Minspeak and have incorporated it into the PRC product line. Today, hundreds of AAC professionals have received Minspeak training and the system is widely acclaimed as the most powerful and popular vocabulary coding system in use. (A subsequent article will focus on Semantic Compaction Systems.)

PRC and Advocacy, Education, Training, and Service

PRC is committed to advocacy for people with disabilities. In 1988, Lake Kissick joined the PRC team as Coordinator of Advocacy, a full time position. We believe that employment should be the goal of many clients. We also believe that all significant programs operating in this field should have at least one severely disabled staff member.

Long ago, it became clear that devices alone do not solve the problems of people with severe disabilities. Education, training and many different types of services are needed as well. PRC has been a field leader in identifying and addressing these needs. Extensive training is now offered, both at the PRC headquarters and around the world. The company has built a unique reputation for providing valued services to people who use PRC devices and the people who

serve them. Further, respected AAC clinicians are creating Minspeak application programs specific to particular client populations. And finally, a strong consultant network, based on salaried professionals, is available to assist in the selection and application of systems.

International Presence

PRC products are available throughout much of the world. Presently, the largest market outside the United States is the United Kingdom. PRC is represented there by Liberator Electronic Aids, a joint venture. Liberator will also be developing the market for PRC products through the European Economic Community. Canada is also a significant market for PRC products. Betacom Systems for Disabled People provides exclusive representation of PRC in Canada. Other agents represent the company in Australia, Sweden, Switzerland and South Africa.

Until recently, PRC products were limited to the English speaking world. However, with the development of the IntroTalker, any language can be accommodated. The IntroTalker vocabulary is programmed by speaking into a microphone built into the device. These devices are now being used in many countries.

Contributions to the Field

Prentke Romich Company has been instrumental in advancing the field of AAC. With the support of others, PRC has developed and funds several initiatives. These include the annual *AAC* Journal awards program and the ISAAC scholarship program. ASHA offers an annual scholarship funded by PRC that gives preference to studies in AAC. United Cerebral Palsy Associations now offer an annual communication technology employment award that was stimulated and is funded by PRC.

In addition to these obvious contributions, many of the PRC staff contribute time and activities that enhance the field locally, nationally, and internationally. The company encourages and supports these efforts.

PRC continues to grow at an astounding rate. If our company can be used as a measure, the field is healthy and thriving. If you have not yet come to visit, either for a training school or a casual stop, it's time you made plans. The magic of the fields of AAC and rehabilitation technology is pervasive at PRC.□

Announcement
The United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication USSAAC

USSAAC is pleased to announce that its National Conference will be held in cooperation with the 1989 RESNA Conference June 26-30, 1989 in New Orleans.

RESNA is offering their support to the new organization in the following ways:
- USSAAC and/or ISAAC members may register for the conference at RESNA member rates and have the opportunity to participate in all conference activities.
- USSAAC will host a one-day instructional course during the conference.
- USSAAC will hold its annual Executive Committee, Board and Standing Committee meetings, as well as a general meeting regarding organization of state associations.

For further information contact:
Margaret Carlisle,
USSAAC Conference Chair,
Telephone: (214) 826-7030, ext 2328
Delva Culp, USSAAC vice president, Professional Affairs,
Telephone: (214) 905-3137

Join ISAAC Now

The International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) offers four types of membership:
- Student Membership
- Active Membership
- Contributing Membership
- Corporate Membership

Members of ISAAC are entitled to reduced rates for: *Communicating Together* *Communication Outlook* *Augmentative and Alternative Communication* (AAC journal)

For membership application and other information about ISAAC write ISAAC, P.O. Box 1762, Station R, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4G 4A3.

About the Publisher

The Easter Seal Communication Institute, ESCI, formerly the Blissymbolics Communication Institute, established in 1975, has worked since its inception toward enhancing the lives of nonspeaking people. In its early years the Institute's primary focus was the development and application of Blissymbolics as an augmentative communication system around the world. This role continues through Blissymbolics Communication International, a division of ESCI, but within a broader mandate that reflects the philosophy and perspective of its professional staff.

ESCI supports effective communication by nonspeaking people through:
(1) Contributing to the field of augmentative and alternative communication in a manner that promotes cognitive, social and emotional growth.
(2) Implementing services to improve the quality of instruction for augmentative communicators toward the development of cognitive, social and emotional growth.
(3) Educating, informing and increasing the awareness of those who are in a position to make positive life changes for nonspeaking people.
(4) Incorporating Blissymbolics Communication International within ESCI, to maintain support for the system of Blissymbolics, considering it to be a valuable means to advance augmentative communication that contributes to development and growth.
(5) Making augmentative communication materials and publications readily available to those who require them.

European Affiliate Meeting, 1989

JINNY STORR

Jinny Storr is a consultant to Blissymbolics Communication International. She has been involved in the field of augmentative communication since the mid seventies and has been an active participant in nearly all of the Blissymbol Affiliate meetings since they began in the late 70's. She attended the most recent one in Belgium and wrote the following account of it.

The European Blissymbol Affiliates met for the seventh time, from March 20 to 23, 1989, under the auspices of the Belgian Bliss Association (ASBL) and with the support of the European Economic Community (ECC). The official meeting was preceded by a gathering of International Panel members in Brussels, on March 18 and 19, to continue the development of symbols dealing with sex and reproduction, work begun at the Affiliate meeting in Milan in 1988.

The Affiliate meeting itself opened on the morning of March 20 at the Chateau Beauregard, a turreted mansion atop a steep hill above the small riverside village of Thuin. Representatives from eighteen countries (including two new countries — Greece and Poland) were welcomed by the Director of the IMC Centre and by conveners Annie Gosset and Henriette Dumont. From then on the days were packed full, with reports from each Affiliate, descriptions of programs, case and research studies, demonstrations of computers and software, videos and a full length film. Sessions were conducted in both French and English, Sally Millar from Scotland proving herself to be an indispensable, subtle translator. From time to time, she was relieved of this duty by Hermann Frey (West Germany) and Margareta Jennische (Sweden).

Countries Help Each Other

From the reports it is clear that workers with Blissymbols continue to constitute a community, an extended family. The pattern of sharing knowledge and experience established during the mid 1970's carries on. At that time, Canadians trained professionals in the United Kingdom and Sweden. Sweden then offered training to all the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom helped to introduce the system into Spain, Portugal and France. Recently, France and West Germany have welcomed professionals from Poland to their training courses and West Germany in the near future will conduct a workshop in Poland and provide ongoing consultation there. In another area Malcolm Hind (England) has worked closely with people in Spain and Israel to help them adapt computer software to their needs.

The reports also revealed a continuing, common concern over the need to develop wider professional and public awareness of the needs of nonspeaking people as well as more general recognition of the effects the application of augmentative and alternative communication (ACC) could have on them. Some progress in these areas was evident. Bliss and AAC courses taught by BCI Affiliate Presentors are now being held under the auspices of universities (Norway, Spain), a College of Special Education (Hungary) and a Speech and Hearing Association (Israel). In Italy lectures on Blissymbolics are being given in postgraduate courses in medicine and psychology. In Greece a special education teacher has received a three year fellowship from the University of Athens to translate Blissymbolics materials into Greek, to develop new materials for instructors and parents, and to plan a protocol for evaluating Blissymbol users in Greece. In Israel a new journal on AAC is being published. A West German Bliss class wrote a script for and acted in a film which was shown on national television. A telling feature of the film is its sound track with a background of characteristic sounds made by nonspeakers — the strongest possible witness to their natural impulse and need to communicate and to interact with the world around them.

While the system of Blissymbolics is regarded as offering unique benefits to many nonspeaking people, it is more and more being seen as one of the many tools available in the developing field of AAC. Participants at the meeting appeared to view this as a natural evolution, at the same time agreeing that the system must be kept strong through maintaining a standard form and sound practice so that it will continue to play its special role within the broad field. Repeatedly, attention focussed on the importance of imaginative methods of teaching symbols, methods appropriate to the capacities, physical and mental, of each individual student.

Elementary training programs are in place in all countries with "mature" organizations, although in some instances the pressure for training has moderated since the early days. On the other hand, the West German group currently finds itself stretched to the limit by growing interest. Some groups are experimenting with additional training formats. Belgium and France each offer courses in Blissymbols and computers. Sweden is making a training video incorporating pictures, signs and Blissymbols. Hungary supplements its basic Bliss course with a half day devoted to sensitizing participants to the confined situation in which nonspeaking people find themselves. Israel conducts a two-day Blissymbolics update session each year.

This conference, like every European Blissymbol meeting before it, called attention to the effectiveness of organized working groups of people active in the field. Their missions vary — from planning and scheduling training courses, to answering enquiries, to developing ideas for materials and making them, to raising money. Some publish newsletters which reach a wider audience of colleagues and friends. The important thing is that all offer a forum for the exchange of ideas, the thrashing out of problems, the sharing of good experiences. They supply the moral support so

much needed in a demanding and stressful type of work.

Blissymbols and Computers

Everywhere interest in the use of computers for symbol users is growing. Not unnaturally computer manufacturers are urging wider use, but careful monitoring of the Blissymbol software they offer will be required. Claudia Wood, BCI Toronto, is compiling the names of authorized monitors for each of the Affiliate countries which will be available on request. Manufacturers also need guidance from experienced professionals on accessing systems and devices, and there is a list available of Technical Liaisons in different countries. Participants were reminded that copyright agreements are necessary when Blissymbols are used in all materials and computer software. Computers displaying Blissymbols were demonstrated at the meeting — from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Italy and West Germany. The latter, developed through cooperation between the Spastics Society and the Technical University of Berlin, is a portable device and capable of individualized accessing. The gloss for existing Blissymbol software for Apple, IBM and BBC computers is being translated into many languages.

A Time for Fun Too

Although everyone concentrated hard during the scheduled sessions, the four days were far from "all work and no play". In Brussels we visited the Grand Place with its Gothic City Hall and surrounding baroque buildings, headquarters of the once powerful Guilds. We explored nearby narrow lanes full of shops, restaurants and lively crowds. More than a few of the group acquired hoards of the chocolate for which Belgium is famous.

During the Affiliate meeting itself, participants were housed in three hotels in Charleroi, twenty minutes from Thuin. On the way there the first night our driver thoughtfully detoured to take us past the site of the Battle of Waterloo. And each trip thereafter between Thuin and Charleroi was an adventure. Our two bus drivers were of a special breed, having volunteered to don chauffeurs' 'hats' in place of their official ones as Director of the School and Director of Rehabilitation at the Arthur Regniers Centre. Acting as tour guides as well as drivers, they kept up a running commentary. Their informative and amusing descriptions of places and scenery we passed added a special dimension to our time in Belgium.

The third day of the meeting consisted of a bus trip to Mons where the well preserved architecture of many periods and styles bears testimony to the history of that part of Belgium as the ground on which successive, powerful foreign nations confronted each other. As usual, Claudia Wood seized the opportunity of having us captive on a bus for several hours to conduct another symbol development session. On the final morning, the special feature was a trip to the Arthur Regniers Centre where we had a choice of visiting the school, the rehabilitation unit or the workshop where adult day-care clients work at tasks or jobs graded to their individual capacities. At the end of the tour we were addressed by the Medical Director of the Centre who praised the role Blissymbols have played in the activities of the Centre, closing with the statement, music to the ears of all who heard him, "Blissymbols are here to stay."□

Ralf Schlosser of West Germany demonstrates his portable device to meeting participants.

Technology for Language and Learning

Technology for Language and Learning is a newly formed non-profit organization whose goal is to advance the use of computers and technology with children and adults with special language and learning needs. One of TLL's projects is to create and collect high quality public domain software and to distribute it to parents, educators and organizations working with children and adults with language and learning problems.

The public domain software collection includes Apple programs that can be used with the keyboard and with the PowerPad, Touch Window, the Echo Speech synthesizer and for single switch use. TLL has programs that are appropriate to use with individuals who have language impairments, aphasia, learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Programs are $5.00 each, plus postage and handling. Contact Technology for Language and Learning, P.O. Box 327, East Rockaway, New York 11518-0327.

Alternative and Augmentative Communication Routes Used by a Nonspeaking Autistic Boy

MARGARETA JENNISCHE

Ms. Jennische is an experienced speech therapist, working in University Hospital, Uppsala, Sweden. In this descriptive case study, she tells how, by persistent training, it has been possible to assist a fifteen-year-old autistic boy in developing alternative and augmentative communication routes for some degree of social communication. The training was filled with pessimism alternating with astonishment, discoveries and inspiration.

After difficulties in using manual signs, the boy was introduced to Blissymbols which positively affected his ability to communicate and his interest in written words. Although at age fifteen he is still autistic and nonspeaking, he has demonstrated a clear desire to ask for things and to relate his experiences. He has become a resourceful young man, utilizing all the communication tools to which he has been introduced and also inventing new ones.

Per's Early Years

I want to tell you about a boy called Per with whom I have worked for six years. As a child who is nonspeaking and autistic, he has had a very unusual communication development. I will concentrate on this and upon his training which for several years took place at our hospital clinic and later at school.

When Per was four-and-a-half years old, he came to our clinic for the first time. At that time he had already gone through many examinations in which he had been found to have mental retardation, retarded motor development and, above all, extensive retardation in communication development. Interaction with his surroundings was abnormal in many ways. From his first year he had shown very little interest in contact with others. Although he accepted some body contact from his parents and initiated some by himself, it was obvious from his behaviour that the most basic abilities in relating to other people were damaged.

Per was almost five years old when his therapy started at the clinic. He had no interest at all in pictures and did not pay attention when spoken to. The therapist thought that gestures and manual signing would be the only way of getting his attention. He was described as restless, secluded, and absorbed in himself. He was fascinated by looking out of the window or looking at his mirror image. Often he made a strange humming sound. On and off, he showed short instances of contact such as pulling his mother's arm. Mostly, though, he was completely occupied by his own activity — running around, climbing on the furniture, searching for small, hard things, playing stereotyped games.

After half a year with almost no feedback, the therapist wrote about the therapy: "I don't really know what I have accomplished. I have tried to stimulate him at his level. I hope he has caught something." Some time later she wrote: "My purpose has been to try to awaken his wish to communicate and to find means for his communication. I have presented different gestures to him and tried to play with different sounds. Hopefully he will use what he has seen me do when he really needs it."

In fact, a few times Per did show that he noticed and remembered what his therapist had presented to him. At the end of one year of training, his day care centre reported that he had used a few signs spontaneously, such as "book". Nonetheless, progress was very slow, and the therapist wrote: "I have often felt desperate about the boy as he doesn't make more progress."

During the following two years, the therapy continued as before. The therapist was persistent in presenting new manual signs representing different concepts. He learned them but rarely used them spontaneously. The contact between Per's day care staff and the therapist was such that the therapist told them which new signs had been presented, and the staff tried to introduce and use them with him.

A Breakthrough with Signing

After three years of persistent training, when Per was a little more than eight years old, the therapist wrote: "Per's ability to express himself with manual signs has really exploded. He even uses short sentences." She further described how Per's behaviour had changed along with this. From having been extremely unable to concentrate, he had become cooperative and could work for periods of ten to fifteen minutes at a time. Between these periods, however, he would run around as before, investigating all the desks, looking for small metal things to put in his mouth.

Per started school in a small group of children with similar problems in January 1982. His interest in pictures and letters which had been very small started to grow. One of his favourite occupations was to sit and "study" magazines. He tore out the pictures and words he liked as well as those words and pictures that he disliked. He wanted to have words repeated to him hundreds and hundreds of times.

His learning in signing was accompanied by written words and of course pictures. Per learned many common words as word-pictures. He also learned the names of all the letters but was not able at this time to use any written words for communication. Because of Per's growing interest in words we gave him a Canon Communicator. Copying words on the communicator, on a typewriter, or by his improving handwriting became a game, a fascinating activity, but most attempts to make him listen to the different sounds that built up the words were rejected. The therapist acted as a model by writing words, and sounding all the letters.

After some time he started to try to write words for communication.

This often caused problems. He only remembered some of the letters, and he got very disappointed if the listener could not understand. He would choose a book and search for words and letters that looked right. During these years his drive to communicate grew. The difference between what he wanted to express and what he was able to express through signing and writing was large. This was a period of fast development. He showed an inventiveness that sometimes surprised those working with him, and he became very insistent on making his message understood.

Per's spelling always caused problems and misunderstanding. He also had problems retrieving the words he wanted. He often ran around pointing at things, colours and textures. He blew his breath at the window pane or spat on the table to draw pictures.

The Beginning of Blissymbols

Per needed a systematic presentation of all words and a support for his memory. At age thirteen, we introduced Blissymbols. Per loved to build up the Bliss communication board. He could concentrate for a long time, constantly asking for more symbols. He looked in the Blissymbol dictionary, asked for the meaning of the symbols and chose carefully among them. The problem was to avoid putting too many symbols on the board.

As many of the Blissymbols are pictographic and easy to understand they gave an immediate support to his memory. Per was not interested in listening to long explanations of the shape of the symbols. That would probably have been too abstract for him anyway. He noticed, though, that the elements in one symbol came back in another which gave us the opportunity for some explanation. For the concepts where symbols were missing, we just wrote the words on the board. The effect on his ability to communicate was considerable. The ease with which he found words now helped him through many difficult situations.

After two years he had a 500 symbol board. He had separate boards for use in the kitchen, with tools and when eating. He had one board for his sewing activity on which he also had all the different stitches he knows. He had a separate binder, with lots of symbols categorized, where he put symbols and words for which there was not room enough on his board.

A Growing Interest in Words

This past fall, he has shown more and more interest in using the alphabet on the board and has a preference to spell many words. Per is not fixed in "copying" activities any longer. He writes mostly for communication. He "plays" with the words. He puts a finger over one half of a word and recognizes a new word.

Per is now fifteen years old. He is still a boy with many problems. He is often worried and unsatisfied. He cannot sit in his chair when something enters his mind. He has to run to the window. He has to run to the cloak room where all the shoes are. He shows very clearly that there are things in his mind that he is not able to handle, that need to be expressed. Sometimes he gets stuck with a thought, a feeling or an event so that a whole day's activity gets spoiled. Sometimes he gets very aggressive and unhappy. If it then happens that he hurt someone, he immediately regrets what he has done and shows this with signs. He is unhappy and recognizes that he has problems controlling his feelings. Per also has a motor problem. His finger and hand motor skills are poor. Therefore his manual signing is difficult to understand. His movements are mostly too fast and he has worked a lot on controlling them to be able to sew, saw, paint and write. He is almost too critical of is own work and gets stuck and frustrated. His true motor problems are obvious when he tries to say words. Nowadays though, he is willing to practise. The sounds are produced with irregular pressure and he has very little coordination between breathing, phonation and articulation.

But Per now has a great desire to ask, to explain and to communicate. All the different means he has to communicate help him a lot. Most of his bad behaviour has disappeared and he is more open to explanations. In fact, the only way of helping him when he gets stuck, frustrated and unhappy is to calm him down, open the Bliss board, and by using symbols, manual signs, writings and drawings put words to his feelings and questions. It takes time. He may ask the same thing many times. It is very important to treat him seriously and it is well used time.

I will end by stressing the importance of using the same visual means for communication when talking to Per. He understands much better when he gets the message visually as well as auditorily. We have come to understand more and more how large his auditory problems are.

And with our understanding has come Per's love of communication and his growing independence.□

Editor's Note

This case study was originally presented at the *Animations of the Mind* conference, Anaheim, California, 1988, and is published here with the author's permission.

Per and his friend Margareta Jennische

NEW RELEASES

New Strategies for Augmentative Communication Programs

Augmentative Communication: Implementation Strategies, a new book from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, offers techniques for introducing, managing and evaluating augmentative communication programs in schools, clinics, hospitals and nursing homes. It also serves as a valuable teaching tool for university training programs and in-service enrichment. The 914-page, ring-bound notebook is based on a two-year study of eleven sites and the experiences of more than ninety practicing speech-language-hearing professionals. It features a handy evaluation matrix to help set up an exemplary augmentative program or evaluate an existing one.

Practical, Comprehensive Contents

Chapters tell how to identify and evaluate users; acquire, distribute and maintain equipment and materials; encourage community and caregiver participation; conduct professional staff development; and initiate and improve program administration. A section on mastery of augmentative aids and techniques includes information on beginning skills, vocabulary development, conversational skills, group activities, classroom implementation and literacy skills.

This book is the final component in a series of augmentative communication materials which includes a curriculum guide; a textbook, *Augmentative Communication: An Introduction:* and a video, *Talk is Not a Four-Letter Word.*
Price: In Canada $60.
+ shipping/handling
Available from ESCI, 250 Ferrand Drive, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada M3C 3P2
In USA $45 ASHA members, $70 Non-members
Contact ASHA, 1081 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 USA

New Language Intervention Software for Visually Impaired

ACTION/MUSIC is a computer enhanced language intervention activity for Severely Visually Impaired children with developmental ages of fourteen months to five years. Toddlers and preschoolers use the computer to talk about ACTION play with balls, bikes and wagons, and MUSIC play singing with a guitar, a tape recorder and sound making toys. High contrast monitor and keyboard graphics and (optional) braille labelling on the keyboard overlays introduce severely visually impaired (SVI) children to computer use.

ACTION/MUSIC is the fourth in PEAL's line of language intervention programs developed by Dr. Laura F. Meyers. PEAL's easy to use programs include EXPLORATORY PLAY for developmental ages of eighteen months to three years, REPRESENTATIONAL PLAY for twenty-four months to five years and KEYTALK, a beginning literacy program for children from three years.

Dr. Meyers' programs are unique because children are in control of the speech output and use it to talk about the play activity. KEYTALK allows children to hear as well as to see the letters, words and sentences as they appear on the screen. Programs for Early Acquisition of Language (PEAL) have been used successfully by individuals and special educators since their publication in 1985.

Available from:
PEAL Software
5000 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 105
Calabasas, California 91302

Blissymbolics Communication International Distributors

Canada
Easter Seal Communication Institute
24 Ferrand Drive
Don Mills, Ontario
M3C 3N2

In Québec, Canada
(French Materials only)
Association de Paralysie Cérébrale du Québec Inc.
Centre de Ressources Bliss
525, boul. Hamel est, Suite A-50
Québec G1M 2S8

United States
EBSCO Curriculum Materials
Box 1943
Birmingham, Alabama 35202
U.S.A.

Australia
Kathryn Barrett
The Spastics Centre of New South Wales
5 Aquatic Drive
Allambie Heights, NSW 2100
Australia

Netherlands
Bliss-symbolen
Communicatiecentrum
Revalidatiecentrum
"De Trappenberg"
Crailoseweg 116
1272 EX Huizen, Nederland

Spain
Pilar Such Acin
ASPACE
Apartado 55
20.080 San Sebastian, Spain

United Kingdom
Blissymbolics Communication Resource Centre (UK)
c/o The Spastic Society
382-384 Newport Road
Cardiff CF3 7YU, U.K.

Questionnaire

Regarding the Use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication with Adult Nonspeaking Populations

In the March 1988 issue of *Communicating Together* Volume 6, Number 1, we published an announcement of a survey being undertaken of the adult nonspeaking population. Concern has been expressed that there is a lack of documentation of the clinical work done to date in the field of augmentative and alternative communication re communication systems with adult nonspeaking people. In general, clinicians work with only one or two adults and therefore are lacking sufficient clinical experience to make generalizations, draw conclusions or even document the experiences with any degree of certainty.

A questionnaire has been developed in Israel by Shula Friedrich, Michal Nir and Judy Seligman-Wine to collect information from clinicians in the field. The authors hope to collect enough responses to collate the data and extract the information with a goal of sharing clinical findings.

They have had many responses to the questionnaire so far, but are still hoping for more.

Copies of the questionnaire are still available in North America from:

Easter Seal Communication Institute
250 Ferrand Drive, Suite 200
Don Mills, Ontario
Canada M3C 3P2

Easter Seal Communication Institute

Position Available Educational Consultant

The Easter Seal Communication Institute requires an educational consultant with a knowledge of augmentative communication to work within the Educational Service Program team.

The ESCI Educational Service Program provides consultation to school boards, teachers, families and other agencies in Ontario who are involved in planning educational programs for students using augmentative communication. Working within a collaborative-consultative model, consultants interact with professionals within boards and agencies to undertake educational and communication assessments to determine nonspeaking students' learning needs in all areas of the school curriculum or preschool program.

Candidates should have a knowledge of the educational process within the field of regular and special education, ability to organize and present seminars on various related topics, and be able to work independently as well as being a flexible, functional member of a multidisciplinary team.

A Master's degree in education or educational psychology, or master teacher with B.A. and Specialist's certificate in Special Education, or equivalent is required.

Please direct inquiries to:
Director, Easter Seal Communication Institute
250 Ferrand Drive,
Don Mills, Ontario, M3C 3P2

COMMUNICATION OUTLOOK

Communication Outlook is an international quarterly offering a multidisciplinary source of information on the latest products, and research & development in augmentative and alternative communication.

To receive a sample issue, overview and subscription form, fill out this form and send it to: ***Communication Outlook*****, Artificial Language Laboratory, 405 Computer Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1042.**

please send a sample issue and subscription form to:

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

ESCI Special Interest Seminars

In Toronto
The Easter Seal Communication Institute (ESCI) holds a series of seminars throughout the year on a variety of topics related to the application of augmentative communication.

Seminar planned for the summer:
• Blissymbol Elementary Workshop, July 17-19, 1989 (3 day seminar)

Fall schedule will be available mid-June.

Contact: Training Coordinator, Easter Seal Communication Institute, 250 Ferrand Drive, Don Mills, Ontario M3C 3P2
Telephone: (416) 421-8377

University Summer Courses

York University — Toronto
Alternative and Augmentative Communication
• July 4-14, 1989
Shirley McNaughton.
Contact: Office of Programmes, Faculty of Education, York University, N801 Ross Building, 4700 Keele St. N., North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3.
Telephone: (416) 736-5001.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute
Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication
• June 19-30, 1989
David Beukelman, Pat Mirenda.
Contact: Nancy Brown, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 202 Barkley Memorial Center, Lincoln, Nebraska 68583-0732 USA.
Telephone: (402) 472-3955.

Purdue University — Indiana
• June 5-16, 1989
Nonspeech Communication.
Lyle Lloyd.
• June 18-30, 1989
Communication Intervention with Severely Handicapped.
George R. Karlan.
• July 6-August 2, 1989
Computers and Exceptional Individuals. George R. Karlan.
Contact: Purdue University, SCC, Bldg. E, West Lafayette, IN 47907 USA.
Telephone: (317) 494-7335.

4th Canadian Congress of Rehabilitation

In Toronto, Ontario
• June 21-23, 1989
"Workers and Workplaces"
"Challenges and Innovations"
Contact: Secretariat, CRCD, One Yonge Street, Suite 2110, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1E5.
Telephone: (416) 862-0340.

Pathways to Partnership

In Chatham, Ontario
• June 28-30, 1989
Wheels Inn Hotel — For front-line workers, teachers, parents. One stream will focus on augmentative communication.
Contact: Paul McPhail, Southwestern Regional Centre, Box 1000, Blenheim, Ontario N0P 1A0.
Telephone: (519) 676-5431, ext. 241.

RESNA '89

12th Annual Conference
In New Orleans, Louisiana
• June 26-30, 1989
"Technology for the Next Decade"
Contact: RESNA, Suite 700, 1101 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: (202) 857-1199

Computer Resource Centre Colorado Easter Seal Society

In Georgetown, Colorado
• July 24-28, 1989
Comprehensive Course on the "Adaptive Firmware Card."
• August 7-11, 1989
"A Hands-On Overview of Computers and Adaptive Equipment"
Contact: David Schmitt, Director, Computer Resource Centre, Colorado Easter Seal Society, 5755 W. Alameda, Lakewood, CO 80226 USA.
Telephone: (303) 233-1666

OSLA 30th Annual Convention

In Toronto
• October 19-21, 1989
Airport Hilton Hotel
Contact: OSLA, c/o 2267 AbbotsBury Street, Burlington, Ontario L7P 4H7

Touch the Future
Southeast Regional Conference on Assistive Technology Practices and Applications in Education

In Atlanta
• November 1-3, 1989
Contact: Joy Kniskern, Rehabilitation Services, Room 706, 878 Peachtree Street N.E., Atlanta, GA 30309
Telephone: (409) 894-6744

Southeast Augmentative Communication Conference

In Birmingham, Alabama
• October 20-21, 1989
Guest Speaker: Linda Burkhart
Contact: Pamela Elder, Coordinator, United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Birmingham, 2430 11th Avenue N., Birmingham, AL 35234
Telephone: (205) 251-0165

Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Seating, Positioning and Mobility

State of the Art Conference

In West Lafayette, Indiana
• September 24-26, 1989
This conference is sponsored jointly by the midwest regional RESNA and ISAAC and will be held at Purdue University.
Contact: John M. Wellman, Division of Conferences, 116 Stewart Center, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907 USA.

Communicating Begins with

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Power in Play — Another Minspeak™ Application Program From Prentke Romich Company.

Something happens when a child is at play! With each nursery rhyme, song, or game, the child discovers something wonderful... the power of communication!

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Power in Play — a successful way to introduce communication.

Designed to use with either a Touch Talker or Light Talker utilizing 8 location overlays.

Recreational activities (rhymes, songs, and story books) teach colors, numbers, descriptive concepts, multiple meanings of icons and early sequencing.

POWER IN PLAY's vocabulary provides for common daily activities such as basic needs, bedtime prayers, special messages, etc.

Accommodates to a child's developmental levels. Seven overlays allow coding for up to 17 predeveloped themes with a total of *only 30* icons.

Variations of themes are a unique feature in that a clinician can control the amount of language used in order to match abilities, needs, and communication goals.

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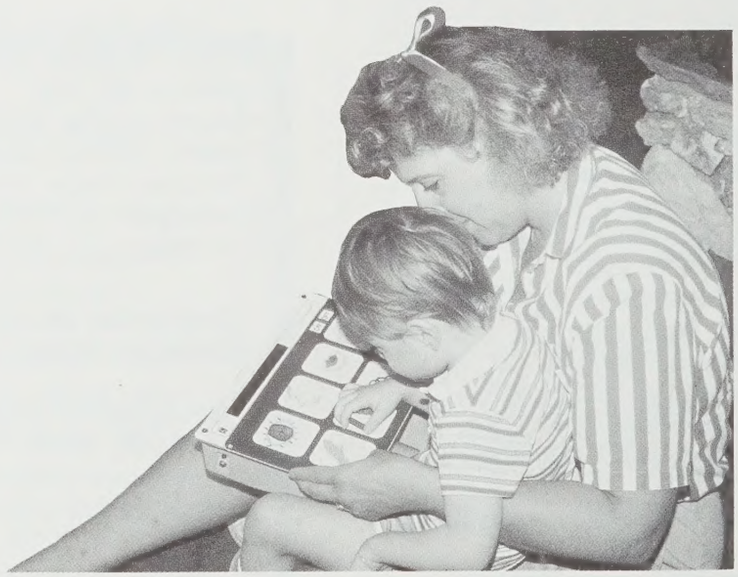

Prentke Romich Company
1022 Heyl Road · Wooster, Ohio 44691
(216) 262-1984 or 1-800-642-8255
FAX (216) 263-4829

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Betacom Systems for Disabled People
723 Halpern
Dorval, Quebec
Canada H9T 1G5
(514) 636-9267

UNITED KINGDOM:
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Whitegates
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